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## **Senate passes brownfield redevelopment bills**

**Lansing**— Sen. Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) today announced Senate passage of two bills that would allow for the redevelopment of brownfield sites and increased job opportunities in Michigan.

“It is important to keep the clean-up process going if we want to continue to support environmental protection and pave the way for more businesses and jobs in Michigan,” said Birkholz, sponsor of one of the bills. “Community members and businesses are strongly supportive of kick-starting this program. Revitalizing our brownfield sites is one of the recommendations of the Land Use Leadership Council.”

Senate Bills 805 and 806 will redistribute \$75 million from the Clean Michigan Initiative for local brownfield cleanup and redevelopment projects. The money will be equally divided into a new revolving loan program and the existing grant program established under CMI. The money provides for new loans and grants to local units of government that have identified economic development plans and forged partnerships with the business community.

“Moving this money will allow local governments to use these funds more effectively while ensuring funding will be available for future generations,” Birkholz said.

In addition, two amendments were passed that increase the maximum allowable expenditure for sites posing acute health threats to \$93 million and expand the kind of cleanup activities that can be financed under the loan program.

(More)

The funds placed in the CMI revolving loan program would be repaid by municipalities and, therefore, the program would be self-sustaining. This would reduce the need for large, new bond issues to support brownfield cleanup and redevelopment of existing contamination sites.

The CMI revolving loan fund would provide local governments greater flexibility in crafting a development deal that best meets the needs of the community and the developer. Repayment of the loan could be financed by the developer, the community's general fund, a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, another tax increment financing authority or some other means based on the needs of the project and the creativity of the community.

The bills are part of the JOBS plan – “Job Opportunities for Business Success” – recently introduced by House and Senate Republicans, and follow recommendations made by the governor's Land Use Council earlier this year.

“This is good for job creation, good for communities and good for the environment,” Birkholz said. “Cleaning up contaminated brownfield sites and increasing development is a top priority.”

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**Comments from Sen. Birkholz on the CMI legislation are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop) or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000.**